Honors Program Pins New Scholars

By Holly Britton
Contributing Writer

On the evening of Friday Oct. 21, students and their families gathered in the E-Lounge for the Honors Program pinning ceremony. Before the ceremony began, the students were shown out into the hall where they lined up with returning honors students, to prepare for their entrance. Dr. David Rhea, Political Communication professor, began the ceremony at 6pm calling the students in with the Star Wars theme song. The students walked up the middle aisle and took their place at the front of the room.

Dr. Rhea spoke a little before introducing Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Deborah Bordelon. Dr. Bordelon spoke on the importance of their involvement in the honors program as well as the importance of students getting involved on campus and in the community.

Kristy Goodwin, Director of Recruitment and Outreach in the Office of Admissions, also spoke. Goodwin brought up honors student Juan Gutierrez, who was an original high school recruited student. Goodwin described the story of the honors program and how much the programs have helped students grow. Goodwin stated, “Don’t be afraid to be uncomfortable.” She further explained that if you are uncomfortable, you are growing and learning.

Three current honors program council students, Jocelyn, Linda Coleman, and Meghan Boots, stood up to speak to the new honors students more about the honors program, some of their future goals, as well as the benefits that students receive just by being in the program.

Following the students, GSU President, Dr. Elaine P. Maimon, declared that she had strong belief in the students and their potential. As a reference, Dr. Maimon spoke of the cubs and their teamwork to describe the relationships the honors program helps to build. With teamwork, students can achieve anything they want. Dr. Maimon continued to discuss the opportunities that Governors State University provides and how students can create opportunities to help them achieve their goals.

Following President Maimon, students were called up one by one for recognition of their success thus far. Students received their honors pin from student Linda Coleman, their certificate from President Maimon, shook hands with Dr. Borderlon, and received their honors cup from Professor Laura White. As part of the ceremony, new students returned to their seat for their pinning.

Returning honors program students had the honor to place the honors pins received on the new honors students. There were 28 new honors students pinned during the ceremony. At the end of the ceremony, students and guests socialized over snacks. Many students also used the time to purchase honors t-shirts. The funds from the sale go back to the program to enhance and create more opportunities for the honors program.

Although each student had their own reasoning for joining the honors program, one student, Jamie, stated that she joined to inspire her son. No matter the background or reason, each student who joins has the opportunity to grow and learn more as a member of the program.
Editorial

How to care about Election Season

By Misturat Ganiyu
Associate Editor

Election Day is upon us. “Early Voting” for Illinois residents began last week. The term means that from Oct. 24 to Nov. 7, people can vote before Election Day. To vote early, one must be a registered voter. Governors State University is listed as a polling place for Will County residents.

Ignoring conversations regarding the presidential election has remained difficult. For now, we are surrounded by its coverage. It is discussed in mass media and social media, at work and in school. Some people view the nonstop coverage as annoying, but it will continue to happen, and it should matter to us. Here are a few ways to care about the 2016 Presidential election:

- Watch or Read information relating to the presidential candidates daily. Familiarize yourself with the candidates’ stance on issues. This is the part where we will skip news sites’ or news channels’ suggestions. Consider reading various perspectives. Only consuming information that aligns with your political ideology hinders your worldview.

- Search commonly used political terms. Politicians and political commentators will use the same jargon repeatedly so instead of ignoring them, learn, understand, and seek examples.

- Talk to others. Everyone has an opinion about the election. Politics is one of those subjects that can quickly turn into a heated argument, so converse with people who can handle disagreements. One can also give a caveat before the conversation. Vote. The 2016 Presidential Election affects all of us.

Grad Column

The IRB Process at GSU

By Matthew Gentry
Grad Columnist

The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research is hosting an informational session about the IRB process at GSU this Wednesday, November 2nd from 10-11 a.m. in room D34050. RSVP to ospr@govst.edu.

IRB? What is that? Does it apply to me? This is a common question for graduate students, many of whom are conducting research for the first time. The IRB stands for Institutional Review Board, and is a process that any student must complete if their study requires data collection from human subjects such as a capstone project for your thesis, dissertation, case report, etc. Importantly, you must gain approval from the IRB before you begin any work with your research subjects. Also, you must obtain the signatures of your research advisor, and all committee members, as well as the dean of your college on your application. The IRB process from the time you submit your application, make revisions, and get approval can require up to 8 weeks or more. Many students have planned their projects or budgeted their time not knowing this.

Federal guidelines require that all projects must be approved through the IRB, whose purpose is to provide protection for the people who are part of your study. The IRB wants to make sure that subjects are informed of the risks of participating, give consent voluntarily, and that the project will not cause harm.

All information about the submission process is available at www.govst.edu/irb, and a few guidelines are below. To submit a project application, first determine which of the 3 categories of review you require, as different categories have different forms to complete: 1. Exempt Status means that your project poses no minimal risk and does not include minors or prisoners as participants. 2. Expedited Review is used for projects that pose minimal risk, or to collect sensitive/confidential information, and can include minors. 3. Full-board Review is for everything else; projects that pose more than minimal risk and/or are externally funded.

Additionally, you must complete Human Subjects Research (HSR) ethics training provided through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), commonly referred to as “CITI training.” CITI training is a multi-module training for which you receive a certificate upon successful completion. Your certificate must be renewed every 3 years at GSU.

Understand that your research advisor must also have a current CITI training certificate that must be turned in along with your research application and staff. Therefore, CITI training is required for anyone involved in research projects at GSU. Your certificate must be renewed every 3 years at GSU, normally one (1) year after the previous one. You can find more information about the GSU IRB process in the presentation “Graduate Student Resources”. A copy of the presentation can be found online in the Blackboard course, “Graduate Student Information Center” under “Graduate Student Resources”. All IRB information is also available online at the IRB website, www.govst.edu/irb. If you have any questions, contact your research advisor or send an email to ospr@govst.edu. Good luck completing your capstone project!

Most of the time, the IRB will request clarifications about procedures, a missing document such as the consent form, or wording changes. In general, the more detailed information that you can provide the better, especially in the protocol section. Talk specifically about what qualifies as a subject, the exact survey/phone script/assessment tools utilized, step-by-step details about what the subjects will experience during your study, and what steps will be taken to ensure confidentiality.

The Graduate Professional Network recently had an informational workshop about the GSU IRB process. Handouts and a copy of the presentation can be found online in the Blackboard course, “Graduate Student Information Center” under “Graduate Student Resources”. All IRB information is also available online at the IRB website, www.govst.edu/irb. If you have any questions, contact your research advisor or send an email to ospr@govst.edu. Good luck completing your capstone project!

OpEd

Ask Holly

By Holly Britton
Contributing Writer

I’ve been dealing with a lot of change lately and it is making me uncomfortable. What can I do to make it easier?

Many people fear change. They become uncomfortable in the situations they are in and are not accepting of change. The thing to remember is that change is not necessarily a bad thing.

Change can bring a variety of opportunities to you that may not have come before. Sometimes the change is just in mind-set.

Change can be scary and uncomfortable. That uncomfortable moment is where growth and opportunities occur. This is why it is critical to embrace change when we are confronted with the need to do so.

Change can be rough and uncomfortable and that’s okay. Don’t fear change because we have all changed to get to where we are today and will change to become who we need to be. Change is one of the only things that stays consistent throughout our lives.

There are a few tips that can make adjusting to change a little easier. The first one is being open to change. If we are not open to changing, we aren’t open to growing into the people we are supposed to be.

An example I like to use is a fish in the river. If you follow the river in its natural flow, you can change your location and you do it with ease. However, if you swim upstream, you’re still changing your direction. You will use more muscle, and it take a lot longer, but you will get to that new destination; the new you.

Change shouldn’t be feared, but embraced to make transition and growth flow more naturally.

The PHOENIX is published twenty four times annually. We welcome articles, suggestions, photos, commentary, cartoons, and letters to the editor on issues that concern you or the GSU community. We reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity, legality, and interest to our GSU readership. All submissions must be credited, and include the submitters full name, graduate status, and field of study.

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PHOENIX
Khalil Marrar

The Professor Profile for this issue is Dr. Khalil Marrar from the College of Arts and Sciences.

Interviewed
By Brenda Torres
Editor-in-Chief

Phoenix: What classes do you teach at the university?

Marrar: I teach discussion, research, and writing intensive courses on the Middle East and North Africa, International Relations, Conflict—from the inner-city level to global hotspots, and the political nexus between Public & Foreign Policy. My pedagogical portfolio at GSU includes working across six programs: 1. Political Science (undergraduate), 2. Politics & Social Justice Studies/Political & Justice Studies—Graduate, 3. Public Administration—Graduate (PADM), 4. History, 5. Social Science, and 6. Geography, Environmental Studies, Religious Studies, Islamic and World/Middle East Studies (These are programs that have either been founded or will come into being in the future).

Phoenix: How long have you been a teacher?

Marrar: I’ve been a professor since 2002.

Phoenix: Your research focus is intersection of public policy, foreign affairs, administration and Middle East politics. Can you tell me about what sprouted your interest on these subjects?

Marrar: I wanted to help people denied justice because they lack access to power. I was inspired by my upbringing as a child refugee. My parents were refugees as well. I wanted to make a difference for people that suffer, whether they’re members of my family living in one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the world on Chicago’s South Side or Iraqis and Syrians getting massacred by ISIS because of their sex, race, gender, ethnicity and/or religion. I believe the best way to do right by all human beings is to “think globally, act locally,” as the saying goes. The only method we have for changing any evil practice is through policy—to get our hands dirty with politics at home and abroad. We also must form coalitions based on class and identity as survivors of poverty, racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, and Islamophobia.

Phoenix: You have published essays and books. Can you tell me about them?

Marrar: Sure. I just finished a chapter for a forthcoming book called Ethnic Lobbying and Congress, due out in the next few months. I have a book about the Basics of Middle East Conflicts, to be published around this time next year. I have a journal article in an Airforce publication about how American foreign policy is changing because of the developments of the Arab Spring—turned Winter. My first book was about how citizens can influence public policy and civil rights as well as foreign policy by lobbying their government as well as changing the issue mindset of fellow Americans—be they classmates at GSU or politicians in Springfield or Washington. I have several other writings in volumes on President Obama’s leadership, the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, terrorism, and advocacy.

Phoenix: What is your favorite part about teaching?

Marrar: My students. I am fortunate to be at GSU because our student body is mostly first generation, is very diverse, and is united by zeal for learning to improve their lives and the lives of their loved ones. And I love that. I am in awe of students that beat all odds to be here. I am motivated to live up to GSU’s mission one student at a time. I am excited about the leadership of our administration and faculty in steering GSU’s transition despite the budget crisis. I’m honored to be a member of Juggar Nation.

By Veronica Butterfield
Contributing Writer

The Student Education Association is a pre-professional organization of undergraduate and graduate students preparing for careers in education.

As members of the IEA Student Program, students are also a part of the larger Illinois Education Association, an education professional organization representing over 130,000 members in the state, across 40 campuses in Illinois. IEA Student Program members are also part of the National Education Association (NEA), a network of state associations that has over two million members and is a major force in shaping the nation’s education agenda.

Benefits to student members include student scholarships, professional publications, the Haisman student award, IEA app, professional development workshops, CLASS grants, SOAR grants, mentoring program, mini-resumes, liability insurance, IEA rebate, prizes, and food. Any GSU student can join but SEA is geared toward those planning to work in the education system. This can include teachers, social workers, school counselors, occupational therapists, etc.

There is a $30 membership fee each school year since the organization is affiliated with NEA and IEA. Most of the annual dues go directly to NEA and IEA. The rest of the money goes toward food and drinks at meetings and events as well as raffles at every meeting. Any student, faculty, and staff can participate in most of events held by the SEA (whether they are a member or not). Only a few events are limited to registered members of SEA, and they are designated as such. This is because the dues members pay are used for food and other items.

Everyone is welcome to participate in community service projects and other events. The Student Education Association holds one meeting and one community service project every month (open to everyone). Members attend one conference and plan one social event each semester (these are for registered members only). They also like to help other student organizations at GSU.

For example, last May the president participated in the Physical Therapy club 5K walk/run and several SEA leaders and the lead advisor donated pet food to the donation drive GSU women’s basketball team held.

President Samantha Allen foresees a successful year. “We want to host special guest speakers that can give our members information about working in schools that we don’t have room for in our (wonderful) education courses,” said Allen.

The next meeting will be on Monday, November 7th from 3:15-4:45pm in the G lobby.

This meeting will be focused on veterans. There will be a few guest speakers from a local veteran’s office. Participants will also be packaging donations for veterans in need.

On Wednesday, November 16th from 9 am - 2:30 pm the organization will have a STEM day. SEA members will visit elementary schools and plan and engage in STEM activities with the students.
By Donnica Gordon
Staff Reporter

On Saturdays and Sundays, the GSU library becomes a study hall area for student-athletes where they complete class assignments. Most weekends, Courtland “Amy” Holman, the library’s Circulation Manager, monitors their activities. Between 10 and 18 students participate in library study hall. They are required to dedicate six hours per week to studying.

“So far, it has been a huge success,” Holman said about the library partnership with the Athletics department.

Each student-athlete must maintain a 2.5 grade point average. “If they get a 3.0 GPA within a semester, they do not have to attend study hours for the next semester,” said Tony Bates, Basketball Coach and Athletics Director. He added, “…Having them understand the commitment towards the educational side of things is very important because we truly want to have student-athletes here.”

“We establish up front expectations,” Holman said.

Some of those “expectations” for the student-athletes include respecting the Library staff and actually doing homework. They stay near the entrance area where the staff can see them. The students must be actively studying, such as writing a paper, studying for an exam, or researching a topic.

“You get to encounter people who wouldn’t normally come into the library…” Holman said about the increase in student athletes visiting the library on the weekend.

After they have completed study hall hours, they submit timesheets to their coaches. Studying in the library is one of the many ways student-athletes can reach their weekly goal of six hours.

“It’s based on the fact that student-athletes have a very rigid schedule when it comes to practice, games, weightlifting, training. So a lot of times if you don’t have a set structure when it comes to studying, the day can get by you. So understanding that as a part of your day makes [things] go a lot smoother…” Bates said.

GSU Student-Athletes go for the win in studying

By Misturat Ganiyu
Associate Editor

On Oct. 24, President Maimon held “The Chat with the President”, at Prairie Place. Other administration were present at the chat. President Maimon explained the ongoing Illinois budget crisis, and its affect upon GSU. President Maimon wanted the Chat to be conversational, instead of being just a Q&A Session. She explained that GSU only received 30% of their budget for FY16, and only 50% of the FY17 Budget. Many GSU students receive the MAP Grant. However, the state has not dispersed enough funds to cover it. GSU will cover the shortage to fund the MAP grant for GSU students for both Fall and Spring.

President
Maimon
Chats about
the Budget

By Lester Van Moody
Contributing Writer

GSU Foundation Invites You to “Match the Maimons”

By Donnica Gordon
Staff Reporter

Today, Governors State University Foundation launches a new fundraising campaign, “Match the Maimons.” The goal of the campaign is to raise $100,000+ to positively impact and enhance student success at GSU.

President Elaine P. Maimon and Dr. Mort Maimon will donate matching funds of up to $54,000 on a 1:1 basis for every dollar raised from new, increased, or additional gifts made from Oct. 31 to Dec 16.

This means that for every dollar given to the university as a new gift, an increase over a prior gift given, or multiple donations made by the same person, the Maimons will give a dollar as well resulting in a potential $108,000 dollars being raised in a two month period.

People can “invest in their interests” by contributing to any program, project, college or department they choose. There are several impact initiatives that your gift can support including: Athletics, the Center for Performing Arts, Diversity, Dual Degree Program Scholarships, Food & Housing Insecurity, Leadership & Service, Library and Faculty Resources, and the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park.

“At GSU, we pride ourselves on helping good students become great students, and great students become even better. Your gift allows us to provide extra resources to enhance student success,” said Will Davis, Vice President for Advancement and Executive Director of the GSU Foundation.

Gifts can be made online at http://govst.edu/donate. People can also send a check to the GSU Foundation, or call and give their credit card information to Gina Ragland at 708.235.7559.

Every gift counts. Students, Alumni, family, friends, faculty, staff, community members, and any one interested in the success of GSU students are encouraged to make a donation of any size.

The impact initiatives can be on the foundation’s webpage at http://www.govst.edu/givingtogsu.
President Maimon Chats about the Budget (cont.)

President Maimon encouraged each student to fill out the FASFA Form, which opened October 1st, in order to apply for financial aid. Even though 2016 taxes haven’t been filed, we are able to use 2015 tax information.

A student proposed the question, “What if your income changed since 2015, what should you do?” President Maimon advised the students to speak to their financial aid officers about the process. Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, Dr. Randi Schneider, added, “Just fill out the FASFA form now, and submit it. If there’s any change, you can always go back and correct it. It’s not about when you finish it, it’s about when you [first] submit it.”

One student said he understood that if you apply for financial aid as an independent student you can get more money. President Maimon said that students needed to be cautious about such matters. She said that a student who is 24 or younger probably should not claim independent status because it would be more difficult to get a Pell Grant. She said one exception is when both parents are deceased.

According to the Office of Financial Aid, there are a limited number of other circumstances under which students 24 and younger can claim independent status. Among them are being married, having dependents other than a spouse, and being a veteran or an active duty member of the U.S. armed forces.

Another participant asked, “Will the Cafeteria be open on Sundays?” Director Betsy Joseph answered, “Based on past history with Arena being opened on Sundays, only a few people on campus would go over to the cafeteria. It seemed more convenient for students to go to the C-Store.”

A student asked, “Certain Core Classes are offered at night, and not during the day. Can there be times that Core Classes be offered during the day?” Provost Bordelon advised students to register early so the demand can be seen. If there’s a need for an extra class section, talk to the Department Chair. If they see that only a few people are signed up, the class will be canceled. Some people wait until the week before school starts to apply. Therefore, the best thing to do is register early.

Another question was then put forth, “Some people have holds on their accounts. Is there a way they can register with a hold?” Dr. Schneider explained, “$2,000 is the threshold limit for people living in Prairie Place. As long as it’s under $2,000, they are able to register.”

Governors State University students and employees brought their families to the event. Children from the Family Resource Center were also in attendance. In addition to eating an array of spooktacular foods, the children paraded their costumes along with Mr. and Ms. GSU, Ju’Juan Day and Ashley Palacios. There were many other fun activities available for the participants including coloring, crafting, games, and Halloween stories read by Mr. and Ms. GSU. Candy was also provided for the children.

Brenda Rock, who wrote this piece, wore a Halloween costume portraying Snow White’s stepmother. The costume was a favorite of many of the children who lined up to take pictures with Rock. There was music and dancing at the party with enthusiastic participation by kids and adults.

The event was very lively with many GSU staff members stopping by to eat and watch the children. The Family Harvest Festival was a success, according to Sledge.

By Brenda Rock
Contributing Writer

On Oct. 25, the Family Harvest Festival, hosted by Student Life, took place in the Hall of Honors. According to the Assistant Director of Student Involvement and Campus Programming Konya Sledge, the purpose of the event was to celebrate the preharvest and costumes of the season.

There was plenty of food to eat including haunted burgers, chili, cupcakes, brownies, chips, water, and fruit punch. Children were the main guests of the event. Governors State University students and employees brought their families to the event. Children from the Family Resource Center were also in attendance. In addition to eating an array of spooktacular foods, the children paraded their costumes along with Mr. and Ms. GSU, Ju’Juan Day and Ashley Palacios. There were many other fun activities available for the participants including coloring, crafting, games, and Halloween stories read by Mr. and Ms. GSU. Candy was also provided for the children.

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Mr. and Ms. GSU read stories to the children. Photo by Brenda Rock

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